

DNREC Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police Blotter: June 24-30

Reminder for the week: Have a safe holiday weekend on Delaware waterways



DOVER – To achieve public compliance with laws and regulations through education and enforcement actions that help conserve Delaware's fish and wildlife resources and ensure safe boating and public safety, DNREC's Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police officers between June 24-30 made 2,410 contacts with anglers, boaters, and the general public, issuing 76 citations. Officers responded to 82 complaints regarding possible violations of laws

and regulations or requests to assist the public. A Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police presence continued at the C&D Canal Conservation Area and Michael N. Castle Trail.

Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police Actions

- On June 25, Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police officers arrested Willard Burris, 61, of Felton, for 17 counts of failure to tend commercial crab pots at least once within the required 72-hour timeframe on the Delaware Bay. Burris was arraigned at Kent County Justice of the Peace Court 7, where he plead guilty, was fined \$187, including court costs, and released.

Citations issued by category, with the number of charges in

parentheses, included:

Fisheries Conservation: *Recreational:* Failure to tend crab pots at least once within required 72-hour timeframe (2), use of crab pots without required turtle excluder (3), crab pot tampering (2), possession of undersized blue crabs (8), possession of undersized largemouth bass (1), possession of undersized summer flounder (1), unlicensed fishing (6)*, and no Fisherman Information Network (FIN) number (2).

Commercial: Failure to tend crab pots at least once within required 72-hour timeframe (17) and crab pot tampering (2).

Boating & Boating Safety: No life jacket on a child age 12 or younger as required by law (2), operating a vessel with insufficient number of life jackets (4), operating a vessel under the influence of alcohol (1), negligent operation of a motor vessel (1), allowing use of a non-compliant vessel (2), jumping the wake of another vessel on personal watercraft (1), failure to observe slow no wake (3), and no boating education certificate (5).

Public Safety: Passing in a no passing-zone (1) and possession of drug paraphernalia (1).

Other: Trespassing after hours on a state wildlife area (10)* and littering (1).

**Includes citation(s) issued at the C&D Canal Conservation Area.*

DNREC's Division of Fish & Wildlife recognizes and thanks the majority of anglers, hunters, and boaters who comply with and support Delaware's fishing, hunting, and boating laws and regulations. The public is encouraged to report fish, wildlife, and boating violations to the Delaware Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police by calling 302-739-4580 or through the DENRP Tip app on a smartphone, which can be downloaded free of charge by searching "DENRP Tip" via the Google Play Store or the iTunes App Store. Wildlife violations

may also be reported anonymously to Operation Game Theft by calling 800-292-3030, going online to <http://de.gov/ogt>, or using the DENRP Tip app. Verizon customers can connect to Operation Game Theft directly by dialing #OGT.

Are you AWARE?

Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police want the many boaters heading out for the long 4th of July holiday weekend to enjoy safe boating on Delaware's waterways, and remind boaters that drinking and boating don't mix. Boat operators found to have blood alcohol levels of .08 or higher will face charges for operating a vessel under the influence as well as putting themselves, their passengers, and other boaters at risk.

Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police officers will be out on the water during the holiday weekend, increasing their presence for Operation Dry Water, an annual nationwide awareness and enforcement campaign aimed at preventing alcohol and drug-related boating accidents and fatalities. For more information on Operation Dry Water visit [DNREC Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police promoting Operation Dry Water July 5-7](#).

Other tips for recreational boaters to ensure a safe and enjoyable holiday weekend include:

- Exercise patience and courtesy at crowded boat ramps and docks.
- Observe all Slow No Wake areas.
- Maintain a lookout for other vessels and keep a safe distance away.
- Avoid traveling at unsafe speeds, including congested areas.
- Make sure children 12 and younger are wearing life jackets while underway as required by law.
- Check navigation lights and make sure to turn them on when operating at night.

For more information on safe boating practices in Delaware, please visit [Delaware Boating Safety](#).

To report boating, fisheries, and wildlife violations, please call the Delaware Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police 24-hour dispatch line at: 302-739-4580 or 1-800-523-3336.

Follow Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police on Facebook, <https://www.facebook.com/DEFWNRPolice/>.

Follow Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police on Twitter, https://twitter.com/DE_FW_NRPolice.

Contact: Sgt. Brooke Mitchell, Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police, 302-739-9913, or 302-382-7167.